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Supply of mid-day meals in compulsory elementary education areas of South Kanara.

* 57 Q.—SRI D. MANJAYA HEGDE: Will the Hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the mid-day meals provided for the school-going children in the compulsory elementary education areas in South Kanara and especially in Beltangady sub-taluk have never been supplied properly and have been dropped now altogether; and

(*b*) if so, what the reason is, for withdrawing such help?

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—
" (*a*) & (*b*) The Government have no information on the point. The Government have issued orders discontinuing the scheme of supply of mid-day meals to poor children from 1st April 1947, not only in South Kanara district but also in all other districts in the Province."

SRI D. MANJAYA HEGDE:—" May I know, Sir, whether the Government are going to supply mid-day meals to give encouragement to elementary education?"

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—
" The Government are prepared to encourage elementary education without this mid-day meals."

Discontinuance of free mid-day meals in compulsory elementary education areas.

* 58 Q.—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO: Will the Hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have decided to abolish the system of free mid-day meals in the compulsory education areas and whether they have communicated their decision to the concerned authorities;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that the strength and attendance in schools improved after the introduction of mid-day meals;

(*c*) whether the Government have changed the policy enunciated by them that free mid-day meals and compulsory education should go together;

(*d*) if so, whether the Government propose to reconsider their decision in view of the effects of the discontinuance of mid-day meals on the spread of elementary education;

(*e*) whether representations have been received requesting Government to reconsider their decision; and

(*f*) whether the Government propose to issue instructions for the continuance of mid-day meals till a decision is arrived at?

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—
" (*a*) Yes.

" (*b*) The Government have no definite information on the point.

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" (c) The policy was to provide mid-day meals to school children in compulsory areas to the extent the funds permitted. The Government have discontinued the scheme on financial considerations.

" (d) *to* (f) It is too premature to reconsider the matter."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I ask the Hon. Minister for Education whether his department has not pointed out in their report that the strength and attendance in the schools had improved after the introduction of mid-day meals? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " Yes, Sir. It is quite possible that the strength and the attendance might have improved after the introduction of the mid-day meals. But that was considered seriously and Government thought that it was an expenditure which they could not afford. It was 22 lakhs of rupees for the first year, it was 47 lakhs or so for the second year and it might come to four crores as it goes on. In the present state of the finances of this Province, Government thought that they were not in a position to continue this mid-day meals."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I ask the Hon. Minister for Education whether the Government propose to supply reconstituted milk in place of the mid-day meals? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " In certain districts, Government previously supplied reconstituted milk. Recently also orders have been issued that reconstituted milk may be supplied in certain districts."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Will the Hon. the Minister for Education please call for a report from the head of the department and see whether the strength and the attendance have suffered after the abolition of the mid-day meals? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " No purpose will be served by asking for a report. I agree with the hon. Member that after the abolition of mid-day meals, attendance is somewhat meagre."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" May I know from the Hon. Minister what is the object of the Government in providing this mid-day meals except to increase the strength and attendance in the classes? If that was the object, may I know whether Government will reconsider the matter and accomplish their object of improving the attendance by the provision of the mid-day meals and also by providing better nutrition to the children who are starving? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " Government are foregoing large incomes for other purposes such as the introduction of prohibition and therefore, they thought that the provision of mid-day meals might be given up for the present."

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SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know whether compulsory starvation is not necessary for compulsory education?"

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " I do not understand the relevancy of the question."

DR. SIR A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" Will the Government be pleased to investigate the possibility of giving mid-day meals only to deserving persons from the point of view of public health and nutrition? Will the Government consider giving effect to such a scheme in selected areas at any rate? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " It is not possible, Sir."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Is the Hon. Minister for Education satisfied that no progress in compulsory education is possible unless Government provide mid-day meals at least to the classes of children mentioned by the hon. Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliyar and in view of the fact that no compulsion can be enforced unless this provision is made, will the Hon. the Minister at least take the trouble and accept the suggestion of hon. Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliyar and see that people who are really indigent are fed? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " While Government will readily accept the position that the provision of mid-day meals will increase the strength and attendance at schools, they will not accept the position that no progress in compulsory education is possible without such provision."

K. T. M. AHAMED IBRAHIM SAHIB BAHADUR :—" If the Hon. the Minister for Education is of the view that first priority should be given to education, then is it not his responsibility to improve the attendance at schools by providing this mid-day meals? "

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR :— " I am cent per cent with the hon. Member but there are other departments and schemes for which allocation of funds has to be made."

Subsidy for constructing tanks for irrigation.

* 59 *Q*.—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that in the new scheme sanctioned by the Government to subsidize the sinking of new wells, provision has been made for subsidizing the construction of new tanks also in the district of South Kanara ; and

(*b*) if so, whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government for granting such a subsidy for constructing tanks for irrigation purposes in all the other districts also?